



YASI Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Released: October 2022

The Youth Assessment Screening Instrument (YASI) measures a youth’s level of risk, needs, responsivity factors and strengths to guide early decision-making and assignment of case resources, as well as assist in the development of targeted case plans. The YASI looks to identify both the dynamic (changeable) and static (unchangeable) risk factors of youth to help professionals better structure and allocate services for youth with higher needs.

The YASI assesses 10 domains:

Legal History	Family	School	Community/Peer	Alcohol/drugs
Mental Health *	Violence/Aggression	Attitudes	Skills	Employment/Free Time

*Identifies whether a MH assessment is warranted

The YASI is an instrument specially designed for youth, and these 10 domains were selected for assessment due to many years of research on the predictors of delinquent behavior. Risk scores derived from assessment indicate the likelihood that the youth will receive a new referral or adjudication within 1-several years. Furthermore, the information collected during assessment guides the creation of a case plan tailored to each youth's identified needs and strengths. This approach focuses on the factors most critical to promoting positive outcomes for that youth. The entire assessment and case planning process is informed by motivational interviewing, and is designed to engage youth, provide them a sense of ownership over their case plan, and match supervision and intervention strategies with the youth’s levels of risk and motivation.

Related to YASI Policy 3.01 Administration of the Prescreen

NEW: Is it appropriate for the YASI to be used with youth who have not yet been referred for YJ services?

Research indicates that when practitioners over- interfere in the lives of children/youth, it can have a negative effect and lead the youth to deeper involvement in the justice system. *There are several reasons for this, including increased burden on the youth to comply with expectations, exposure to youth who are at high risk of reoffending, and other factors.* The YASI should not be used for youth who have not been referred for committing a crime. Risk assessments are designed to predict the risk of reoffending, not first-time offending. Youth who have not been referred for delinquency but who may have other needs, unrelated to risk, such as referrals for intervention related to their well-being, should be evaluated through other human service systems, and utilize more appropriate tools to help guide that process.

Contact us for a list of research articles for further review and understanding.

NEW: When a new referral comes in and the youth has already had a YASI prescreen done (but not a full assessment) do I create a new prescreen or update the initial one?

If the youth is still involved in the same episode of youth justice involvement, the initial prescreen should be updated. If the youth is currently on supervision, the referral should likely trigger a reassessment. If the case has been closed and the youth is no longer on caseload, a new Initial Assessment should be created in CaseWorks, no different from youth with previous full assessments (see below).

NEW: What do I do when a youth who has had a full YASI completed gets off supervision and then I get a new referral? Do I have to start over from scratch with a new YASI?

If the referral is for a youth who was previously on supervision, the most recent closing assessment should be copied and carried forward as a new Initial Assessment, a new interview of the youth shall be conducted, and the assessment shall be updated. Be aware that when an assessment is copied forward, the scoring information is copied but your domain notes are not. You can still access those notes, by opening the old assessment where the notes were originally documented.

What counts as "police contact" under "number of police contacts" (Q3)?

- Any episode that ends in the county taking an action that results in diversion or adjudication, including:
 - Counsel and close
 - Citations for criminal behaviors (that were not otherwise referred)
 - Deferred Prosecution Agreement
 - Referral to the prosecutor's office for a petition

- This does not include charges that were dismissed at intake or during the court process or petitions the District Attorney's office fails to prosecute within legal timelines. (However, the acts in question may be scored for other purposes, such as in Violence/Aggression item 1.)
- Multiple charges stemming from one incident count together as one contact, but multiple incidents grouped together under one petition count as separate contacts.
 - We are not counting police contacts that were due to status offenses, including **citations** for: curfew, underage drinking, truancy, running away, smoking cigarettes.

When scoring current and past offenses (Q4), including those involving firearms/weapons (Q6), should I include current charges when it is not known whether they will be adjudicated?

Yes, charges awaiting adjudication are counted, if any charges are dismissed or amended, worker should go back and revise the youth's legal history items accordingly (and mark that you did so). Whenever possible, this should be done prior to completing the full assessment.

In Caseworks, what does "Initial Assessment" mean? Is this related to CPS?

In CaseWorks, "Initial Assessment" includes both the prescreen and the full assessment (if applicable) administered at intake for the current YJ episode. "Prescreen" or "Full Assessment" are displayed as the completion status for the "Initial Assessment." This term is meant to distinguish from reassessments, including closing assessments, and is not related to CPS IA. The Initial Assessment indicates the beginning of a string of assessments for a given YJ episode.

NEW: When only a prescreen has been completed, is there the ability or requirement to do a closing assessment (such as upon successful completion of a DPA)?

No, if a youth has not received a full assessment, worker should not complete a closing assessment. Workers may close the case by navigating to the assessment screen and selecting the "close case" icon on the left. When a case is closed, the prescreen is archived so it can be accessed and updated if the same youth is referred in the future.

Related to YASI Policy 3.02 Serving Youth Identified as Low-risk to Reoffend

None at this time

Related to YASI Policy 3.03 Administration of the Full Assessment

When a new referral comes in for a youth currently on supervision, should we update the current YASI or a create a new one?

When a youth on active supervision receives a new referral, you should not create a new string of YASI assessments if one has already been created. You should reassess the youth (i.e., create a new assessment and mark assessment type as Reassessment).

NEW: Can/Should YASI be administered in JIPS cases?

The YASI is a risk/needs assessment tool designed to assess risk of re-referral and assist in case planning. The YASI Prescreen provides a useful snapshot of a youth's level of risk and criminogenic needs, which can be used to divert low-risk youth from the YJ system and make a referral (if necessary) to more appropriate community-based services.

While the YASI has been validated for use in delinquency cases, it has not been validated for use with truancy. As truancy is a status offense and is not a strong predictor of future delinquency, it is recommended counties do not use the YASI and instead use a needs assessment tool validated for truancy referrals. Although not required, if a JIPS referral results in an adjudication and supervision, a worker may administer the Full Assessment to improve case planning tailored to the youth. However, particular attention should be given to the youth's identified needs, rather than their risk level.

Do we share risk level with the courts/court report? If they want it, how do we message that?

Dynamic Needs and Strengths are shared with the courts in the Court Disposition Report. A Court Disposition Report template and example are available.

NEW: When I complete a Full Assessment prior to a hearing, but then my youth's case is dismissed, how should I document that and close it in CaseWorks?

Trainers have previously suggested workers complete a *Closing Assessment* in this situation. However, we now advise workers to treat this like a "counsel and close" situation and simply archive the case via the *Close Case* icon on the Assessment screen. The worker should also make a note in the assessment to briefly explain that the case was dismissed. The reason for this updated guidance is that if we complete a Closing Assessment the case will show up on reports as if this youth was formally on supervision and then the case was closed.

As with cases ended by a Closing Assessment, if the youth has a subsequent referral, the worker can then create a new Initial Assessment, copy-forward the information from the prior Initial Assessment and update at least the pre-screen questions in order to get new risk and needs scores to inform the intake decision. If the youth has a new petition filed for the new offense, the worker can work to update the rest of the full assessment questions prior to the disposition hearing.

How do I score family when a youth has lived in various settings? Should I score based on the bio family? Group Home? Foster family?

On dynamic items, you should score based upon what the current family looks like over the last 3 months.

If the youth is currently in secure/non-secure placement and is expected to return home upon release, you should score dynamic items based on the home they are returning to. Refer to the "[Placement Scoring](#)" document for additional information on scoring youth in secure or non-secure placements.

If the youth is in a foster/adoptive home and NOT planning to return home, you should score on the foster/adoptive family.

NEW: Should behavioral diagnoses like Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, and Disruptive Behavior Disorder go into the mental health section under "other"? What about anxiety disorders?

ADHD, CD, ODD, and DBD should not be scored in the mental health section, since components of these behaviors are captured elsewhere. You may document notes on behaviors in the Mental Health domain notes. Anxiety disorders can be scored as "other". Note also that ADHD is addressed in the school section and not in mental health.

When scoring items that refer to a "pattern" of behavior, what is the threshold for a pattern?

In the YASI, a "pattern" generally means two or more unique instances.

How should I score *Aggression- Item 1* for youth alleged to have engaged in a single bullying or threatening incident (i.e., there is no "pattern" of behavior)?

For most checkboxes in this item, a single incident is sufficient for scoring. However, bullying/threatening should be scored for a pattern of 2 or more instances, or if they have been charged for threatening behaviors, or for a terroristic threat.

Related to YASI Policy 3.04 Case Planning

I have completed the full assessment and the ABCD. Do I choose the three domain areas and have the youth rank them by number order, or does the youth pick the three domain areas? Am I supposed to write goals based on the conversation with the youth or is the youth supposed to help with wording the goals?

Prior to choosing the top 3 domains, you should go into each domain that has a medium or high score and choose 1-2 targets in each of these domains that have contributed the most to the "A".

Staff should then choose no more than 3 domains that have contributed the most to the “A”. During Feedback, staff will present this information to the youth and family and discuss where *THEY* would like to start. Goals are then developed on the targets prioritized by the youth and family.

NEW: What do we do after a youth completes a goal on their case plan? Do we create a new goal? What happens when a youth completes all the goals we initially developed in the case plan? Do we continue to create new ones until end of formal supervision?

If there are other targets within any of the domains initially identified as high risk and contributing to the “A” or current offense, the youth and case manager may develop new goals and actions steps that meet the needs of the youth and family. If a worker believes the youth has made satisfactory progress during their course of supervision, early termination should be considered.

NEW: How do I improve YASI case planning when there is friction between the process for YJ and some processes for CCS and other partners that may be trying to serve the same youth?

It is critical that all providers work together to serve youth and families in need of services and help families understand how releases of information help achieve system collaboration. Providers, youth, and parents are encouraged to work together to develop case plans and goals that meet the needs of the family and any recommendations of other programs. Some agencies developed local policies and procedures for interdisciplinary cases, which could help identify who should take lead in a case where there are several plans for the youth.

Related to YASI Policy 3.05 Reassessment

When do I reassess?

Reassessment must occur at least every 6 months. Per 3.05(2), any major life events (which could include a major family event, significant school event, new referral, or a motion to vacate a consent decree) should trigger a reassessment, pending a review with a supervisor to determine if a reassessment is necessary.

Related to YASI Policy 3.06 Training Requirements

NEW: I have finished CCW1 training. When can I start administering the assessments to my youth?

Once staff have completed CCW1, they can administer YASI assessments as soon as they receive log-in credentials for CaseWorks. Log in via eWISACWIS links or the CaseWorks link provided at training, start exploring the screens and entering information. Staff can also utilize the "?" button on any page in CaseWorks to access the corresponding Help page. These are not always 100%

Wisconsin-specific, but they are generally very comprehensive and helpful. If you are having trouble with accessing the website, staff can email Orbis Support (support@orbispartners.com).

NEW: I need to miss part of training, is that ok?

Per PDS Policy, you must attend ALL of a YASI training session in order for it to count. If you miss part of a session, you will need to retake it. We understand it is challenging to balance your many priorities, but the expectations around attendance and participation in virtual trainings remain the same as for in-person training. The reason for this is simple: you are the most important ingredient for successful implementation of the YASI in Wisconsin, and training gives you the foundational skills to apply the tool in your critical work with young people.

NEW: Do my workers need to take annual booster training?

Yes – especially once all 4 phases have been trained, DCF requires YASI users to complete annual Booster trainings to keep their YASI skills sharp per YASI policy 3.06 (4). During initial YASI implementation, PDS and DCF will provide updates on opportunities for YASI Boosters when they are available for counties in earlier Phases of the implementation.

Related to YASI Policy 3.07 Duties of the Supervisor

NEW: What is the process to remove workers CaseWorks when staff no longer work in YJ in our county or have retired? Does their name remain in the worker assignment directory because they have completed work in Case Works? Is there a way for them to be “inactive” so we don’t accidentally assign them?

In almost all cases, the best thing to do is lock the account initially, reassign the employee’s cases as appropriate, then delete the account. (It is also possible to reassign cases as part of the deletion process.) This is ultimately the responsibility of counties as part of maintaining accurate staff rosters in CaseWorks. We expect to release formal guidance on this topic in the future.

Locking the account denies access to the software but can easily be toggled on and off by an administrator. (This status is also auto triggered if a user fails five attempts to log in.) Deleting a staff account removes their work from application views, and should be used with caution, but does not delete their record behind the scenes.

NEW: Can youth be assigned to more than one worker either within the same county or across multiple counties? And can supervisors see all their staff's youth?

Youth cannot be assigned to more than one worker in CaseWorks, but users can view others' cases and, where appropriate, transfer assignment to themselves (e.g., an ongoing worker can reassign a youth to themselves upon the handoff from intake). Users should not view cases to which they are not assigned in some way. Supervisors should be able to view and reassign cases for any of their staff.

Other

NEW: Should I do the YASI with ICJ youth from other states?

ICJ coordinators would be involved in determining the specifics of supervision for interstate youth. Per the interstate compact agreement, all parties would agree on which state would pay for services and case planning.

DCF recommends that interstate youth served in Wisconsin should receive a YASI and case plan, unless otherwise stated by the sending state. Wisconsin youth being served in other states may participate in a YASI and case plan if the situation permits and the information gathered should be shared with the receiving state, unless it's known that receiving state has another risk assessment tool or other case planning strategy.

Rule 5-101 (1) of the Interstate Compact: "After accepting supervision, the receiving state will assume the duties of supervision over any juvenile and in exercise of those duties will be governed by the same standards of supervision that prevails for its own juveniles released on probation or parole, except that neither the sending nor receiving state shall impose a supervision fee on any juvenile who is supervised under the provisions of the ICJ." Please reference the ICJ rules for more information on supervision in receiving state, [Section 500](#).

NEW: Can I include detention as a service in my service matrix?

It should be noted that the service matrix is intended to aid in determining appropriate community-based services or appropriate treatments within a placement for a given youth. It is not a dispositional matrix and was not designed for use in determining a youth's placement.

NEW: Is there any information on how many cases a youth justice worker should have at one time? Does the YASI provide a recommendation based on risk level?

Orbis (YASI developers) and DCF have not developed recommendations for how many cases a YJ worker should have at one time. What we know from other jurisdictions and best practice research on caseloads and workloads is that there are several factors a human service agency should consider when exploring how to successfully manage cases and staff. The following should be considered:

- a. Youth risk level
- b. Number of out of home care placements
- c. Supervisor support and availability
- d. Availability of resources
- e. Worker training and education
- f. Worker ability and experience